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UNCLAS BAGHDAD 003490

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [IZ](#) [KHDP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#)

SUBJECT: STATE DEPARTMENT-FUNDED NGO CLEARS UNEXPLODED
ORDINANCE FOUND WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL ZONE

[11.](#) (U) On August 26, MNF-I Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) called on the Iraqi Mine/UXO Clearance Organization (IMCO), a State Department-funded NGO tasked with clearing mines and unexploded ordinance (UXO) throughout Iraq, to assist with the disposal of UXO discovered in the International Zone.

[12.](#) (U) PolMilOff accompanied the IMCO team to the site, a sewage canal within the International Zone being cleaned up in connection with a sewer reconstruction project. Upon initially discovering the UXO, the cleanup team had refused to do further work. A Coalition EOD team had cleared the ordinance initially found at the site on August 24, but was unable to provide additional ongoing support because of other commitments. The IMCO team then offered its support and began working on this project August 27. JASG-C staff welcomed IMCO's proposal. After the sewage canal cleanup is completed, estimated for twelve days, the IMCO team will destroy the UXO. The sewage canal is located on the edge of the International Zone, running parallel to Route Irish.

[13.](#) (U) In their first day of work the IMCO demining crew discovered:

- 3 ct. RPG Type 69 Bounding
- 1 ct. 60 mm mortar HE
- 3 ct. RPG rocket mortars
- 1 ct. RPG) 7M
- 1 ct. 125 mm tank propelling charge
- Assorted UXO scrap material

[14.](#) (U) IMCO, founded and sponsored by the State Department since September 2003, trains Iraqi nationals to U.S. standards in mine detection, clearance and demolition. It was the first NGO created in Iraq, and is headed by Brigadier General (retired) Zahim. There are a total of 171 IMCO personnel, with the majority of their focus on demining in Basra and training of personnel at their site in the Baghdad International Zone. The organization's personnel have cleared 5,600,000 square meters of land, finding and destroying 4,944 mines in Basra alone.

[15.](#) (U) The organization consistently clears land to humanitarian standards, specifically focusing on agricultural and residential areas of Iraq. All operations are fully funded by the Department of State contract, and any payment received by IMCO is automatically used to fund further tasks. Demining operations have not occurred in Baghdad because of security concerns.
Khalilzad